

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 454

DEPT PASS ALL ARAB CAPITALS, LONDN, MOSCOW, PARIS, TEHRAN,
TEL AVIV, FOR INFO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQI FOREIGN POLICY

1. DURING APRIL 24 MEETING WITH NEA/ARN DIRECTOR-DES-
IGNATE ARTHUR DAY, MFA DIRGEN OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS
IBRAHAIM AL-WALI PROVIDED SUCCINCT STATEMENT OF
CURRENT IRAQI FOREIGN POLICY. THIS REVIEW, ALTHOUGH
ENNUNCIATED IN GENERALITIES, IS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE
BECAUSE IT COMES JUST SIX DAYS AFTER RCC VICE CHAIRMAN
SADDAM HUSSEIN MET WITH ALL IRAQI AMBASSADORS IN ARAB
AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND "EXPOUNDED THE FULL
DIMENSIONS OF IRAQ'S POLICY IN ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL
FIELDS". AL-WALI ATTENDED THIS MEETING.

2. AL-WALI SAID IRAQ'S CHIEF GOALS WERE TO
END ITS ISOLATION AND HAVE REGIONAL PEACE AND STABILITY
IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT. SUCH A POLICY
DEMANDED "REALISM AND PRAGMATISM". IRAQ, THEREFORE,
DEVOTED MAJOR EFFORT AND RESOURCES DURING PAST YEAR
TOWARD RAPPROCHMENT WITH IRAN AND RESOLUTION OF KURDISH
REBELLION. THIS WAR, IN ADDITION TO CAUSING INSTABILITY
AND UNCERTAINTY, HAD COST IRAQ 3 MILLION DINARS (US
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DOLLARS 10 MILLION) A DAY. IRAQ HAD HAD TO GIVE

IRAN THE TERRITORY IT WANTED ON THE SHATT-AL-ARAB. THIS WAS A MAJOR CONCESSION, BUT IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY AND IRAQ HAD EVERY INTENTION OF LIVING UP TO THE ACCORD TO THE LETTER. IMPLEMENTATION IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY.

3. IN THE ARAB SPHERE, IRAQ IS LIKEWISE FOLLOWING A POLICY BASED ON REALISM AND PRAGMATISM. IT RECOGNIZES THAT THERE ARE MAJOR DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ARAB STATES, FROM MONARCHIES TO MILITARY REGIMES, BUT IRAQ DOES NOT CONSIDER NATURE OF REGIMES ITS BUSINESS. EACH STATE IS FREE TO CHOOSE ITS OWN REGIME. RELATIONS ARE DEVELOPING VERY WELL WITH SAUDI ARAB, JORDAN, TUNISIA AND OTHERS. IRAQ'S ULTIMATE AIM IS ARAB UNITY, FOR IN UNITY IS STRENGTH AND STABILITY, BUT THIS IS NOT FOR TOMORROW.

4. RELATIONS WITH THE "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES ARE NORMAL. IRAQ MAINTAINS EMBASSIES IN ALL THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES EXCEPT ALBANIA AND EXPECTS TO CONTINUE TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THEM.

5. RELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE ARE NOW VERY GOOD WITH THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN AND THE FRG. ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN PARTICULAR ARE FLOURISHING.

6. THE ONLY WESTERN COUNTRY WITH WHICH IRAQ DOES NOT HAVE NORMAL RELATIONS IS THE US. THIS DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP THAT IS DEVELOPING IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST. WHEN "CERTAIN IMPEDIMENTS" ARE REMOVED, THERE WILL BE PROGRESS ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT AS WELL. HOWEVER, SPEAKING FRANKLY, AL-WALI SAID THAT THE UNRESTRAINED US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL REMAINS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE. HE BELITTLED RECENT SETTLEMENT EFFORTS AND COMPARED ISRAEL TO A THIEF WHO HAD ROBBED THE ARABS FOUR TIMES AND NOW SAYS IT WILL RETURN THE PROCEEDS OF THE FOURTH ROBBERY WHILE KEEPING THE REST. THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. THERE CAN BE NO SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL UNTIL THERE IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGE INSIDE ISRAEL THAT CONVINCES THE ISRAELIS THAT THEY ARE A STATE WITHIN THE ARAB WORLD AND MUST ACCOMMODATE THEMSELVES TO THIS OVERRIDING REALITY. WHEN AND IF

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THIS OCCURRED, ABOUT WHICH THE IRAQIS ARE MOST SKEPTICAL, AN ACCOMMODATION COULD COME ABOUT. HE RIDICULED TALK OF THROWING THE ISRAELIS INTO THE SEA AS CHILDISH NONSENSE. HE REMARKED JOKINGLY THAT THE ONLY OTHER PROBLEM WITH THE US WAS PAYMENT FOR THE FORMER EMBASSY COMPOUND (NOW THE MFA). HE ALSO MADE A POINT OF SAYING HE GAVE USINT SPECIAL TREATMENT BY RECEIVING ME AT ANY TIME BECAUSE OF THE "SENSITIVE" NATURE OF US-

IRAQI RELATIONS. NORMALLY HE RECEIVES ONLY AMBASSADORS.

7. ANOTHER CIRCLE IN WHICH IRAQ OPERATES AND HOPES TO PLAY A PROMINENT ROLE, AL-WALI SAID, IS THE NON-ALIGNED WORLD. IRAQ BELIEVES THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE MUCH IN COMMON AND MUST HELP EACH OTHER. IRAQ IS PROVIDING SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE IN LOANS AND GRANTS TO THESE COUNTRIES. IT HAD PROPOSED BAGHDAD AS THE SITE OF 1979 NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCE, BUT AT THE RECENT MEETING IN HAVANA HAD FOUND THAT SUPPORT FOR CUBA WAS SUCH THAT IRAQ HAD HAD TO WITHDRAW ITS REQUEST.

8. COMMENT: READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN'S RECENT INTERVIEW WITH ROSE AL-YUSUF, TWO ASPECTS OF AL-WALI'S REMARKS ARE PARTICULARLY STRIKING. SADDAM IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT IRAQ'S ROLE AT THIS TIME WAS TO PROVIDE A MODEL OF "SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY AND UNIFIED ACTION", THE CLEAR IMPLICATION OF WHICH IS THAT IRAQ NOW EXPECTS TO PROMOTE ITS INTERESTS THROUGH EXAMPLE AND PERSUASION RATHER THAN COERCION AND SUBVERSION. ON ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, SADDAM SAID GENEVA CONFERENCE SHOULD BE LAST STAGE OF PEACEFUL SOLUTION WHERE ARABS SHOULD GO ONLY AFTER "WE HAVE REACHED PEAK OF ARMAMENT" AND THAT ONLY WHEN ISRAEL BEGINS TO BELIEVE ITS EXISTENCE IS DEPENDENT ON BEING ACCEPTED BY THE ARABS, WILL IT (ISRAEL) ACCEPT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THIS IS CLOSEST GOI HAS COME TO PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF GENEVA CONFERENCE. LOWRIE

NOT BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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